

February 3, 2005

Mr. Andrew Fisk, Director  
Bureau of Land and Water Quality  
Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
17 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0017

Dear Mr. Fisk:

I would like to thank the DEP for instituting the public comment portion at the meeting that addressed issues concerning Gulf Island Pond. I attended both the Lewiston and Rumford meetings. I believe it's very important for the DEP to hear the concerns of the people that will be affected by this regulatory process. I hope the DEP addresses these comments.

I would like to reiterate some of my concerns for this process. Implementation flexibility and time lines should be fair and realistic. Failure to provide adequate time frames and flexibility to implement these limits could be another "nail in the coffin" of an already challenged industry.

Fair treatment throughout the entire watershed is critical. From paper mills to municipalities, a consistent approach to setting implementation deadlines is crucial. The mills should not be held to a different timeline than any other license holder on the river.

At the public meetings, DEP admitted that if all of the mills shut down, Gulf Island Pond would still not meet water quality standards. Also, DEP admitted that if there were no dam, there would not be any algae blooms. What will the owners of the dam be required to do as part of this process?

All parties must continue to work together to include people and jobs into the water licensing formula. Much of the public comments at both meetings expressed these concerns and need to be addressed.

Thank you,

Fran Dragoon